

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING AND WORKSHOP
Century II, Room 202**

**Saturday, May 13, 2006
8:30 a.m.**

Present: Dennis Brunner, Glen Dey, Doug Leeper, Janet Miller and Andy Solter

Absent: Cherylane Adams and Mick Tranbarger

Also Present: Bob Rives; Deborah Foster – GreenWay Alliance; Larry Ross; Scott Wadle – Planning Department; and Doug Kupper, Larry Foos, Karen Walker, and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Miller called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

PUBLIC AGENDA

No Items.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. **Approve the Minutes of the April 10, 2006 Regular Meeting.** This item was deferred until the June 12, 2006 Regular Meeting.
2. **Request from Family of Former Park Director.** This item was deferred from the April 10, 2006 meeting. President Miller referred board members to copies of correspondence from Janet Wright, Wichita Festivals, Inc.; Bob Knight, Former City Mayor; and Suzanne Humphrey, former City employee.

Director Kupper stated that he had visited with park staff concerning the projects Mr. Allen was involved in creating during his tenure as Director of the Park and Recreation Department. He said projects mentioned included the West Side Athletic Field (WSAF), the bike path system, football fields and softball fields. He said two opportunities to name bike paths were the river corridor and the I-135 canal route. He added that opportunities to name football fields existed at Grove and Planeview Parks, and opportunities to name softball fields existed at West Douglas Park. He said he sought suggestions from current and former park staff and former recreation directors.

Solter asked what the family specifically requested. Director Kupper said they had requested that the WSAF Complex or bike path be named after Mr. Allen. President Miller explained that City Council Policy #13 specifically prohibited naming public facilities (a whole park or facility) after a living person. She said when staff communicated that information to the family and suggested the possibility of naming a field at WSAF; the family responded that they would like something more significant. In addition, she said the City had actually received a request from Bob Rives to name WSAF after Daryl Spencer (former major league baseball player) prior to the request from the Allen family.

There was general discussion concerning locations and lengths of the various bike paths including the river corridor (from Garvey Park to 21st St), which was the longest; the K-96 path (from Grove Park east to Greenwich Road); and the canal route (from Linwood Park north to McAdams Park). Brunner

asked which was the most prestigious? Staff responded probably the river corridor, since it was the original bike path in the City. Leeper commented that Mr. Allen did a lot for the park system and that he liked the idea of naming a portion of the bike path system after him. He also suggested naming the train at Watson Park (a park that was acquired during Mr. Allen's tenure) the "Tom Allen Express". He added that he liked the idea of naming a field at WSAF after Daryl Spencer. Responding to a question from President Miller, Director Kupper said the family was anxious to have something named after Mr. Allen, and hopefully, this week. President Miller agreed that it should be something with high visibility.

Solter moved, second by Dey, to recommend that the City Council name the Arkansas River corridor bicycle path after former Park and Recreation Director Tom Allen. Motion carried 5-0.

President Miller requested that staff communicate the decision and rationale to the Allen family

3. **Request to Rename West Side Athletic Field.** President Miller asked Mr. Rives if he had anything to add to the discussion that took place at the April meeting regarding naming a field at WSAF after Daryl Spencer. Mr. Rives mentioned the possibility of also naming the ball field at McAdams Park after Bob Thurman, the only native Wichitan to star in both the Negro League and majors. Brunner commented that he had spoken to several individuals (Owen Friend and Smiley Overby) who knew the history of both ball players. He said they thought the suggestion to name baseball fields after Daryl Spender and Bob Thurman was a good idea.

President Miller asked if there was a neighborhood association in the vicinity of WSAF and if staff needed to run the idea to name a field after Daryl Spender by that group before making a recommendation to the City Council. She also mentioned contacting the McAdams Neighborhood Association to obtain their input and OK on the suggestion to name a field at McAdams after Bob Thurman.

Brunner moved, second by Leeper, to recommend that the City Council name the baseball field at West Side Athletic Field after Daryl Spencer. In addition, he requested that staff contact the McAdams Neighborhood Association regarding the possibility of naming the baseball field at McAdams Park after Bob Thurman. Motion carried 5-0.

4. **Director's Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:
 - Improvements at OJ Watson Park – said \$740,000 had been budgeted for a more prominent entry feature into the park from McLean Boulevard, and improvements and additional track for the miniature train system.
 - Chapin Park – said \$70,000 had been budgeted to initiate design work at the park. An additional \$700,000 has been budgeted in the 2007 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for construction.
 - Summer of Discovery Program – commented that registration is currently taking place for the City's State licensed summer daycare program. He said the program is ten weeks long and the fee is \$80 per week. He said campers take two field trips a week, in addition to use of the City's swimming pools and numerous other activities.

- Mowing – mentioned that most of the City's 6,000 acres are mowed on a 21-day cycle. President Miller suggested that now would be a good time for board members to lobby their City Council representatives for more operational funds for park maintenance. Responding to a question from Solter, Director Kupper explained that as annexation has occurred and the City has acquired more park acreage, right-of-ways, and medians, the maintenance budget has not kept pace with the increased mowing responsibility. He added that almost 300 acres (high visibility areas and medians, downtown area, recreation centers, and athletic fields) are mowed on a 7-day cycle.
- Golf Courses – mentioned that this is the first year the City has managed all five courses. He said green fees and cart rentals have generated over \$1,000,000 the first quarter of 2006, which has never been done before.
- Wichita Ice Center – has generated over \$143,000 in revenues. He added that the Aviators Football Team would begin playing at the center June 18. Responding to a question from Solter, Director Kupper explained that only the golf courses were an enterprise fund and that all other revenue went into the general fund.
- Skate Park at Pawnee Prairie Park – Leeper explained that the issue of a skate park at Pawnee Prairie Park came up at a District Advisory Board IV meeting. Director Kupper explained that Edgemoor Park was the next site scheduled for a skate park. He commented that they have been waiting since before the skatepark was constructed downtown. President Miller suggested the group contact Bob Aldrich with the Orchard Park Neighborhood Association who was instrumental in getting the skatepark built at that location.
- Schweiter Park - reported that the East Schweiter Neighborhood Association was not happy with staff's response concerning the status of replacement of the tennis courts, parking lot, and basketball court at the park. He said a meeting had been scheduled with Councilman Brewer. Dey commented that the group was anxious and a bit unrealistic.
- Osage Park – Leeper mentioned the basketball courts at Osage Park. Director Kupper said they had been identified in CIP discussions.
- Oak Park Task Force – President Miller said she would have a report from the group for the June meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned into a workshop session at approximately 9:25 a.m.

Janet Miller, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett
Recording Secretary

Workshop Session Discussion Attached